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Office of Human Development Services

Special Projects for Severely Disabled Individuals; Announcement of Availability of FY 1980 Grant Funds

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Office of Human Development Services

[Program Announcement No. 13626-80]

Special Projects for Severely Disabled Individuals

AGENCY: Office of Human Development Services, DHEW.

SUBJECT: Announcement of Availability of FY 1980 Grant Funds for Special Projects for Severely Disabled Individuals.

SUMMARY: The Rehabilitation Services Administration, Office of Human Development Services, announces the availability of grants for Special Projects for Severely Disabled Individuals authorized by Section 311(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended. Regulations governing Special Projects for Severely Disabled Individuals are published in the Code of Federal Regulations in 45 CFR Part 1362.

DATE: Applications for grants must be received in the Office of Human Development Services by March 14, 1980.

Program Purpose

The purpose of Special Projects for Severely Disabled Individuals is to establish programs for providing vocational rehabilitation services which hold promise of expanding or otherwise improving rehabilitation services to handicapped individuals (especially those with the most severe handicaps), including blind or deaf individuals, irrespective of age or vocational potential, who can benefit from comprehensive services.

Program Priorities: Goals and Objectives

In FY 1980, it is expected that approximately two-thirds of the projects to be funded will serve general populations of severely disabled individuals, while the remaining third will concentrate their services exclusively on people severely disabled by one of the impairments specified below. Therefore, applications may be submitted under either of these categories: A.—projects serving a general population of people handicapped by a variety of severely-disabling conditions; or B.—projects serving *one* of the following disability groups: arthritis, blindness, cerebral palsy, deafness, epilepsy, mental illness, mental retardation or multiple sclerosis.

A. Projects Serving General Populations of Severely Disabled People

Applications in category A may be designed to provide comprehensive services, including innovative services not commonly or traditionally available in a vocational rehabilitation program, to assist persons with various severely handicapping impairments to function as productively as possible in an occupation compatible with their capabilities and limitations. Also to be considered under this category are proposals concentrating their services on a specific impairment not included among the disabling conditions having priority in category B but recognized as being underserved by the public rehabilitation program. Category A projects may be for the purpose of demonstrating effective methods for expanding or improving rehabilitation services for a target population of individuals so severely handicapped by heart disease, stroke, orthopedic impairments and other disabling conditions that they are considered to require comprehensive services in order to make a satisfactory vocational adjustment.

B. Projects Serving Specific Disability Groups

The disability groups to be given priority in this grant program are determined on an annual basis by the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services. Among the factors considered in such decisions are: (1) the disability groups identified in the authorizing legislation as examples of the populations these projects are intended to serve; (2) categories of severe disability identified as currently underserved by the public rehabilitation programs; and (3) other programmatic considerations, including expanding or improving services for persons handicapped by a specific disability recognized as offering problems of national scope in the field of rehabilitation.

The priority disability groups for these Special Projects in FY 80 are persons severely handicapped by one of the following impairments: arthritis, blindness, cerebral palsy, deafness, epilepsy, mental illness, mental retardation or multiple sclerosis. It is planned to fund one (1) project for each of these disability groups. In the event that no application in a particular disability area is determined through the review procedure to merit Federal support, a second project may be approved for funding in one of the remaining priority disability areas. The decision in such circumstances will be a responsibility of the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services.

It is important that applicants fully understand that applications in this category must focus their activities on individuals having *one* of the above impairments as their primary disability. This would not, of course, eliminate proposals intended to serve multihandicapped persons having other impairments in addition to their primary disability, e.g., individuals with the primary disability of deafness but who are also handicapped by an emotional disorder.

Objectives

The primary objective of projects supported under this grant program is to establish a coordinated approach in the provision of those comprehensive services necessary to improve the functioning level of severely disabled people in the target population to the point where gainful employment may be actually entered or reasonably anticipated. Examples of appropriate project objectives are listed below. It should be understood that these are examples only, and are not intended to restrict or limit applicants in developing project proposals.

1. Development of a cooperative program between a voluntary organization or a specialized treatment resource and a State rehabilitation agency to provide comprehensive rehabilitation services leading to gainful employment of the severely disabled population.

2. Establishment of a community-based program to provide the comprehensive services necessary for assisting the severely disabled target group to make the optimal vocational adjustment of which they are capable, thus eliminating or subtantially delaying their need for institutional care.

3. Establishment of a coordinated, interagency program aimed at facilitating the transition of severely disabled people from an institution to community living and appropriate employment.

4. Establishment of a cooperative program involving special education,

vocational education and vocational rehabilitation agencies aimed at assisting severely handicapped youth to move from a school environment to gainful employment.

5. Development, in cooperation with an agency having specific responsibility for assisting aging people, of a program of comprehensive services designed to assist severely disabled elderly persons to work on a full- or part-time basis.

6. Development of an array of appropriate services for people homebound by severe disability to enable them to participate in community activities and obtain remunerative employment either in or outside their homes.

Eligible Applicants—Available Funds

State or other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations are eligible to apply for these grants.

It is expected that $9,580,000 will be appropriated for this grant program. Of this amount, approximately $6,487,000 will be used for Continuation grants to maintain support for projects initiated in prior years under this authority. Therefore, there would be about $3,093,000 available for new grants in FY 1980. It is planned to use about $2 million of this amount for the support of projects serving general populations of severely disabled people, and the remainder for projects that focus on one of the disability groups cited above as having priority in this grant program in FY 1980.

It is anticipated that a total of about twenty-five (25) grants ranging from $100,000–$150,000 will be awarded, with the average grant approximating $123,000.

Under existing regulations, approved projects can be funded for a maximum of three (3) years. In the event of a change in the regulations, approved projects recommended for more than three (3) years may be adjusted appropriately.

In FY 1979, twenty-six (26) applications were subjected to peer review in the area of mental retardation, of which one (1) was funded. Of twenty-five (25) proposals undergoing peer review in the area of blindness, deafness and multiple sclerosis, four (4) were funded.

Grantee Share of the Project

While the authorizing statute does not require that the grantee share in the cost of the project, it is generally expected that grantees will provide matching funds. In previous years, the cost-sharing ratio has been approximately 90 percent Federal, 10 percent grantee.

Grantee contributions must be project-related and allowable under the Department's applicable cost principles specified in the appropriate appendix to Subpart Q of 45 CFR Part 74.

The portion of project costs not borne by the Federal government is matching or cost-sharing, and may consist of the following: (1) grantee cash outlays, including the outlay of funds contributed to the grantee by third parties; and (2) grantee non-cash contributions which consist of charges for the use of, or depreciation in, real or non-expendable personal property owned by the grantee—see 45 CFR, 1362.8(e). Although in-kind matching is not authorized under the current regulations governing this program, proposed program regulations, 45 CFR Part 1362 published in the **Federal Register** on November 29, 1979, do provide for in-kind matching. It is, therefore, expected that in-kind matching will be authorized during the period of these projects. (Also, see Subpart G of 45 CFR 74 for the Federal rules governing cost sharing or matching.)

The Application Process

Availability of Application Forms

Grant applications must be submitted on standard forms provided for this purpose. Application kits which include these forms and related instructions and information may be obtained by writing to: Director, Division of Innovative Programs and Demonstrations, Rehabilitation Services Administration, Room 3411, Mary E. Switzer Building, 330 C Street SW., Washington, D.C. 2021.

Application Submission

One (1) signed original and two (2) copies of the application with all attachments, including a written statement of approval from the appropriate State rehabilitation agency, are required. The completed applications should be submitted to the: Director, Division of Grants and Contract Management, Office of Human Development Services, Room 1427, Mary E. Switzer Building, 330 C Street SW., Washington, D.C. 20201.

The application must be signed by an individual authorized to act for the applicant agency or organization, and to assume for the organization the obligations imposed by the terms and conditions of the grant award.

Circular A–95 Notification Process

In order to comply with Office of Management and Budget Circular No. A–95, Revised (interim procedures at 41 FR 3160, July 29, 1976), applicants for grant support must, prior to submitting an application, notify both the State and the Areawide A–95 Clearinghouses of their intent to apply for Federal Assistance. If the application is for a statewide project which does not affect areawide or local planning and programs, such notification need only be sent to the State Clearinghouse. Some State and Area Clearinghouses provide their own forms on which this information is to be submitted. Applicants are advised to get in touch with the appropriate State Clearinghouse (listed at 42 FR 2210, January 10, 1977) for detailed information on meeting the A–95 requirements.

Application Considerations

It is recommended that applicants confer with their State rehabilitation agency in the initial stages of developing an application to ensure that requirements of these State agencies are met.

Applications which do not conform with the prescribed instructions, are incomplete, or are received after the deadline of February 29, 1980, will not be reviewed.

Unsuccessful applicants will be informed of this fact, and a brief statement of the reasons for this decision will be provided the applicant.

All final decisions on the approval of applications for funding are made by the Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services, who will make grant awards consistent with the purposes of the authorizing legislation, the relevant Federal regulations, and this program announcement, within the limits of available funds.

The official document notifying an applicant that a project application has been approved for funding is the Notice of Federal Financial Assistance Awarded, which specifies to the grantee the amount of money awarded, the purpose of the grant, the terms and conditions of the grant award, the effective date of the award, the budget period for which support is being given,

and the amount of funding contributed by the grantee to project cost. The initial Notice of Federal Financial Assistance Awarded also specifies the total project period for which Federal support is contemplated.

Special Considerations for Funding

In FY 1980, special consideration will be given project proposals in which the population to be served consists exclusively or predominantly of severely disabled Hispanic people.

Criteria for Review and Evaluation of Grant Applications

All new and competing continuation applications received on a timely basis and conforming with the guidelines in this announcement will be reviewed by qualified experts. Applications are rated in accordance with the following numerical scale of 0 to 4: Not Acceptable—0, Poor—1, Acceptable—2, Above Average—3, and Outstanding—4.

The specific criteria against which applications will be evaluated are listed below:

1. Project objectives are identical with or are capable of achieving program objectives as defined in this announcement.
2. Project activities or tasks are capable of achieving project objectives.
3. Estimated cost to the Government is reasonable in relation to anticipated project results.
4. Budget items are appropriate in relation to project activities.
5. Adequate facilities are available to the applicant to carry out the project.
6. Project personnel, actual or proposed, are, or will be, well trained and qualified.
7. Staffing levels are adequate to carry out the project.
8. Project contains an adequate evaluation component.
9. Project provides for adequate liaison with the State rehabilitation agency and community groups to ensure client referrals, outreach and utilization of project results.
10. Project demonstrates the potential for the project to be continued after termination of Federal support.
11. Project demonstrates the potential for project results to be effectively utilized after termination of support.

Closing Date for Receipt of Applications

New and competing continuation applications must be received by March 14, 1980. Applications will be judged on time if:

a. The application was sent by mail not later than the date specified above as evidenced by the U.S. Postal Service postmark or the original receipt from the U.S. Postal Service, or

b. The application is hand-delivered to the office designated for the submission of the application. Hand-delivered applications will be accepted no later than the close of business on the date specified above.

(Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 13.626, Rehabilitation Services and Facilities Special Projects.)

Dated: December 28, 1979.

Robert R. Humphreys,

Commissioner of Rehabilitation Services.

Approved: January 11, 1980.

Manuel Carballo,

Assistant Secretary for Human Development Services.

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